

**CHARLES TAYLOR MASTER
MECHANIC'S AWARD**

**Fairbanks Flight Standards District
Office Honoree 1994**

JAMES T. HUTCHINSON



HUTCHINSON, JAMES T. Hutch

James Hutchinson was born February 14, 1900, in Williamsport, Pa. At the age of 18 he joined the U. S. Army and was sent to Haines in May of 1919. Hutch's aviation career started when, in 1924, Noel Wien asked Hutch to help install wings on Wien's Jenny aircraft. After completing the job, Noel Wien took Hutch for his first airplane ride. Hutch was hired as a mechanic by Ben Eielson in 1929 and worked there until 1932. While there, Hutch went to Siberia to repair damaged aircraft and search for Eielson and his mechanic, Borland, when they were overdue and later found crashed. Among the aircraft he repaired during the search was Harold Gilliam's Stearman.

In 1930, the CAA issued Hutch a mechanic's license with airplane and engine ratings. In 1936, he helped another pioneer aviator, Bill Lavery, rebuild his Standard D-25, and installed a Wright 200 hp engine. During these early days of aviation in Alaska, he also

worked on Arctic Explorer, Sir Hubert Wilkins aircraft. He repaired a damaged landing gear on Wiley Post's plane during Mr. Post's first round-the-world flight.

Hutch worked for Pollack Flying Service and the Northern Commercial Company aircraft maintenance department on Week's Field. When Northern Commercial dropped out of the aviation business, he took it over under the name of Hutch Aircraft Service and later sold out to Jim Magoffin who changed the name to Interior Airways. Interior eventually became MarkAir, Inc. The FAA awarded Hutch the agency's Mechanic of the Year award for the state of Alaska in 1972, for aircraft repairs and alterations to Lockheed Hercules'.